CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a user, comprising:

    (A) a client computer system, wherein said client computer system is a digital computer;

    (B) a local area network connected to said client computer system;

    (C) a server computer connected to said local area network to provide a means of communicating between said local area network and one or more external communication channels;

    (D) a satellite communication channel connected to said server computer by a radio frequency link; and

    (E) an information provider connected to one or more external communication channels for the purpose of providing information to one or more said client computer systems.

2. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a personal computer.

3. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a Macintosh computer.

4. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a computer workstation.

5. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user

1   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a mini computer.

2   6.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user

3   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a mainframe computer.

4   7.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user

5   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a special purpose digital

6   computer.

7   8.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

8   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Windows operating

9   system.

10   9.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

11   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Windows 95 operating

12   system.

13   10.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

14   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Windows NT operating

15   system.

16   11.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

17   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Macintosh operating

18   system.

19   12.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

20   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Unix operating system.

21   13.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

22   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Linux operating system.

1   14.   A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

2   as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has an OS/2 operating system.

3   15.   A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a

4   user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said local area network is a IPX network.

5   16.   A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a

6   user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said local area network is a IP network.

7   17.   A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a

8   user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said information provider is an internet service

9   provider.

10   18.   A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a

11   user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said information provider is a software distributor.

12   19.   A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a

13   user, as recited in claim 1, further comprising: a modem electrically connected to said

14   server computer to transmit data electronically to a telephone land line.

15   20.   A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider

16   and a user, comprising:

17   (A)   receiving data from said information service provider by a satellite

18   communications channel; and

19   (B)   conveying said received data across a local area network to one or more digital

20   computer systems.

21   21.   A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider

22   and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:

1	(C)	generating a request from said one or more digital computer systems to said
2		information service provider.
3	22.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider
4		and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:
5	(D)	conveying said generated request to said information service provide by a land
6		line communication channel.
7	23.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider
8		and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:
9	(D)	conveying said generated request to said information service provide by a satellite
10		communication channel.
11	24.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider
12		and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:
13	(D)	conveying said generated request to said information service provide by a wireless
14		communication channel.
15	25.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider
16		and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:
17	(D)	conveying said generated request to said information service provide by a routed
18		communication channel.
19	26.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider an
20		a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising: receiving data from said satellite
21		communications channel into computer hardware memory.
22	27.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider an

1		a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising: checking to determine if said received
2		data has an IP format.
3	28.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider
4		and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising: checking to determine if said
5		received data has a packetized format.
6	29.	A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider
7		and a user, as recited in claim 20, wherein said one or more digital computer systems are
8		connected electrically by a local area network.
9	30.	A method for controlling the transfer of information between an information service
10		provider and a user, comprising:
11		(A) receiving data from said information service, wherein said received data has a
12		protocol identifier;
13		(B) determining the protocol of said received data; and
14		(C) delivering said data according to said protocol of said received data to a client
15		computer.
16	31.	A method for controlling the transfer of information between an information service
17		provider and a user, as recited in claim 30, further comprising:
18		(D) receiving a return packet of data from said client computer.
19	32.	A method for controlling the transfer of information between an information service
20		provider and a user, as recited in claim 31, further comprising:
21		(E) delivering said returned packet of data from said client computer to said
22		information service provider.

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1   33.   A computer program to manage communications between an information service

2   provider and a user, comprising:

3   (A)   a routine for receiving information from said information service;

4   (B)   a routine for testing said received information to determine the source of said

5   information;

6   (C)   a routine for delivering said received information to a digital computer system.

7   34.   A computer program to manage communications between an information service

8   provider and a user, as recited in claim 33, further comprising: a routine for determining

9   an age value for said received information.

10   35.   A computer program to manage communications between an information service

11   provider and a user, as recited in claim 33, further comprising: a routine for replacing old

12   received information with newer received information.

13   36.   A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

14   a user, comprising:

15   (A)   a digital computer system connected to a local area network;

16   (B)   a first interface device for communicating between said local area network and a

17   satellite communication channel;

18   (C)   a first connection between said satellite communication channel and a source of

19   information;

20   (D)   a second connection between said land line communication channel and a source

21   of information; and

22   (E)   a means for controlling the flow of information between said digital computer

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1   system and said source of information.

2   37.   A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

3   a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

4   communicating between said local area network and a land line.

5   38.   A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

6   a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

7   communicating between said local area network and a wireless channel.

8   39.   A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

9   a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

10   communicating with said local area network to a satellite.

11   40.   A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

12   a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

13   communicating with said local area network to a routed channel.